

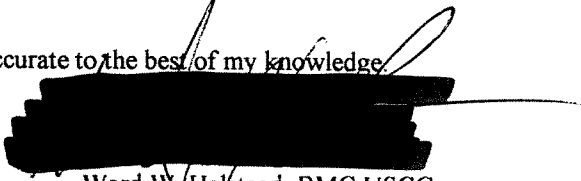
This is a statement of the Sydney Mae II capsizing on the Umpqua River Bar on the early evening of Sep 19<sup>th</sup> 2005, by the duty surfman BMC Ward W Halstead.

I reported on the unit about 1830 to take the duty surfman, and stand duty with BM1 Chapman; who was still waiting to get recerted as surfmsn for Umpqua River. At around 1840 we updated the bar report to 14 to 16 ft braking waves in all areas of the bar. I was informed that the F/V FISKIN II was southwest of the bar anchored, and the Sydney Mae II was still outside the bar as well. When I returned to the station I informed the watch stander to update the bar broadcast on 16/ 22 vhf and call the Sydney Mae II via cell phone to update him (Mr. Oba) with the current bar conditions and to order him to head south to Coos Bay and he was not going to cross the Umpqua bar; he was also talked to earlier via cell phone, and informed that he should head south to Coos Bay; which is standard operations when Umpqua River Bar is closed. He said he would do so. At 1945 after colors we looked at the bar at last light and the bar conditions were the same (14-16ft sluffing breaks).

Shortly after returning to the station, one of the charter boat captains, that was partners with the Captain of the Sydney Mae II, confronted BM3 Davis, BM1 Chapman and myself at the station about the bar report, and that he called the Sydney Mae II and told him that he thought the bar was laying down and that he (Mr. Oba) could get in. My reply to him was "How dare you", and that he was "very wrong in doing so". Then I told the Comm. Room Watch stander to call the Sydney Mae II for at least a third time to go south to Coos Bay and that the bar is closed to all. Shortly after that around 2000 we received calls from other Charter Vessel operators that they heard a loud crash and could see a strobe light just south of the bar.

I quickly told the watch stander to call for helo, recall boat crews for back up and beach rescue, along with the acting Commanding Officer BMC Herrera. We set up for heavy weather and got u/w on the MLB 47229, to cross the bar which was still breaking 14 to 16 ft. We used night illumination flares and headed south of the bar to the reported strobe light. We encounter some debris and located a life raft about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile south of the bar, but there was no one on or around it so we popped off more flares and spotted a reflection and a dim light to the northeast about 400 yards. On the surf line we found two people in the water clinging to a lifejacket, but not wearing them. After we picked up the two survivors we popped more flares and could see more reflections to the north. Once we were on scene with what made the reflection, it was what was left of the boat and empty lifejackets. After that our visibility was less then 50 yds, and with the information we got from the master and other survivor, there was 05 people on board and they did not have their lifejackets on. Mr. Oba stated to my crew (which was relayed to me) that one man was inside the boat when it rolled, the other man was with them but gave up, and he did not see the woman. Once the 47' MLB from Station Coos Bay arrived on scene we were to return to station with the survivors for awaiting EMS.

This statement is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

  
Ward W Halstead, BMC USCG